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BOOK NOTICES

Christianity in History. A Study of Religious Development. By J. Vernon Bartlet and A. J. Carlyle. New York: Macmillan, 1917. Pp. xx+613. \$4.00.

In view of the many histories of Christianity which have been written, the publication of a new book in this field needs special justification. The authors of the present volume are well aware of this fact. Consequently they have dealt with their subject in a somewhat unusual way. They have not attempted to present a statistically complete account of the church as an institution, nor have they endeavored to give a detailed history of Christian doctrine. Instead of aiming at an exhaustive summary of data, they have chosen those items which seemed to them most important and most typical, whether belonging in the sphere of ethics, ritual, doctrine, or organization. In their choice of topics they have had especially in mind the interests and problems of men today who raise questions regarding the true nature and genius of Christianity. The ideal has been to sketch the development as a whole, and to exhibit more especially those historical influences which shaped the course of the development.

The entire history of Christianity is divided into four main periods: the beginnings, ancient, medieval, and modern. Yet these periods are not viewed in isolation from one another, but are merely treated as convenient labels to designate successive stages in one continuous process. The notion of gradual development is applied with an especially healthful emphasis to the interpretation of the reformation movements. In the allotment of space it would seem at first that a disproportionate amount had been given to the ancient period, to which about half the entire volume has been devoted. This arrangement is justified on the ground that the chief determining factors in the entire history of Christianity emerged during this period. True as this may be, undoubtedly many readers will regret that modern Christianity in particular should have been presented so briefly. But all in all the book is a valuable contribution to the interpretation of Christianity's history.

St. Ambrose "On the Mysteries" and the Treatise on the Sacraments by an Unknown Author. Translated by T. Thompson. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by J. H. Srawley. New York: Macmillan, 1919. Pp. 143. \$1.25.

Students interested in the liturgical side of church history will find this book particularly valuable. Ambrose's treatise on the mysteries

was already available in English translation in the library of Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers. But that series did not contain the anonymous work "On the Sacraments." Now both of these important documents are published in convenient form in an excellent translation and prefaced by a brief but adequate introduction.

Asoka. By James M. Macphail. New York: Oxford University Press [n.d.]. Pp. 88. \$0.60.

This is an early number of what promises to be a valuable series, entitled "The Heritage of India." The series is designed to furnish the general reader inexpensive but reliable books covering the history and culture of India. While the writers are Christians, the ideal of the editors is, "everything must be scholarly and everything must be sympathetic." In accordance with this aim, the career and significance of Asoka have been described, not in terms of mere legend, but on the basis of the most reliable historical data available for modern historical scholarship.

The Lausiac History of Palladius. By W. K. Lowther Clarke. New York: Macmillan, 1918. Pp. 188. \$2.00.

An important document of early Christian monasticism is here placed at the disposal of the general reader. Introductory matters are discussed briefly but sufficiently, and the translation is made from the critical text of Butler. The book is one of the most useful numbers in the popular series "Translations of Christian Literature."

The Early Christian Books. A Short Introduction to Christian Literature to the Middle of the Second Century. By William John Ferrar. New York: Macmillan, 1919. Pp. xix+108. 3s. 6d.

This title is misleading; it should have been, "The Early Christian Books Not Included in the New Testament." The author's survey embraces the apostolic Fathers, early gnostic writings, a few apocryphal books, the Odes of Solomon, Justin Martyr, Aristides, and Tatian. The historical setting of the several documents is explained, brief summaries of their contents are given, and some citations are made from the more important passages. As a popular introduction to a body of literature which certainly deserves to be better known by the general reader, the book should render excellent service.